

1-1-1994

# Corporal Punishment Superintendent And Principal Perceptions

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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CORPORAL PUNISHMENT SUPERINTENDENT  
AND PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS

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Corporal Punishment

Superintendent and Principal Perceptions  
(TITLE)

BY

Mary Ellen Grimes

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1994  
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
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## Corporal Punishment

### Abstract

The purpose of this field experience was to examine the perceptions of superintendents and principals toward past use of corporal punishment. A survey of 99 public school district superintendents and principals in six Southern Illinois counties was conducted. Those surveyed were asked to respond to questions concerning perceptions regarding the effectiveness of corporal punishment, alternative models of discipline to change student behavior, and the number of users and nonusers of corporal punishment. In addition, a review of current literature associated with corporal punishment was presented. Included in the review were articles related to both the pros and cons of corporal punishment and alternative models for discipline. An analysis of the survey results and their indications were also presented in this study. The significance of the issue of corporal punishment was illustrated by data on administrators' perceptions of its use as an educational disciplinary practice. The findings and recommendations from this study emphasize the importance of collectively establishing a positive discipline policy conducive to an effective school and a positive experience as a superintendent.

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# Corporal Punishment

## Chapter 1

### Overview

#### Introduction and Background

For many years, there has been much controversy regarding corporal punishment in educational settings. It is an issue that has been fiercely debated and continues to be an emotional issue for many individuals. It is the writer's opinion that corporal punishment is one of the most controversial topics in the area of school management and discipline.

In America, the educational use of corporal punishment goes back to colonial times (Johns and MacNaughton 1990). Organized opposition to the practice reached the United States Supreme Court in 1975, Baker v. Owen. In this case, the Supreme court determined that school officials may employ, over parental objections, corporal punishment to restrain or correct pupils and to maintain order and that there was no definitive statement as to what was reasonable. In addition, corporal punishment was never to be used unless the student was informed beforehand that misbehavior could occasion its use and should never be employed as a first line of punishment. The teacher or principal must punish corporally in the presence of a second school official and must provide a written explanation of the reasons for

punishment and the name of the second official who was present (Jones, 1988). A complaint was filed on behalf of James Ingraham in 1977, Ingraham v. Wright. In this case, the court ruled that the administration of corporal punishment, even if excessive, did not come within the scope of the Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and unusual punishment. In approaching the Eighth Amendment issue, the Supreme Court noted the historical and contemporary approval of reasonable corporal punishment. Only two states had prohibited corporal punishment at the time of the ruling (Jones, 1988).

In 1988, the United States Supreme Court formulated a different viewpoint as it declined to review the case of Miera, Sanchez, and Duran v. Garcia. The Supreme Court let stand a Tenth District Appeals Court decision that gave parents the right to sue school officials for "grossly excessive" corporal punishment, Johns and MacNaughton (1990).

Frustrated with the inability to eliminate corporal punishment through the courts has caused opponents to seek legislative remedy at the state level. Twenty-six states have now banned corporal punishment. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution makes it necessary for individual states to ban corporal punishment (Slate, Perez, Waldrop, and Justen



(1991). As of January 1, 1994, the State of Illinois no longer retains the practice.

Opposition to corporal punishment links the practice to child abuse, including sexual abuse. Opponents also cite other problems with the practice of corporal punishment and believe that it may cause emotional and psychological disorders, as well as stress and low self-esteem. Several organizations have formed to encourage abolition of the practice. The National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools and the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse co-sponsored the seventh annual conference on corporal punishment in Nashville, Tennessee during the fall of 1993. Other organizations such as the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives and End Violence Against the Next Generation, Inc. are dedicated to abolishing corporal punishment in schools. Several other organizations favor the abolition of corporal punishment. These include the National Education Association, the American Medical Association, and the National Mental Health Association.

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of superintendents and principals on the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice

in elementary and junior high schools. The study included three major objectives:

1. The first objective was to identify the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding the effectiveness of past use of corporal punishment.

2. The second objective was to identify the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding alternative models of discipline.

3. The third objective was to determine what percentage of superintendents and principals had been users and nonusers of corporal punishment.

Discipline policies of schools vary from district to district. Many educators today oppose corporal punishment; however, some still advocate the practice. In the past, key court decisions have been rendered in favor of the school system, unless unequal or discriminatory administration of punishment was proved. Illinois has now banned the practice of corporal punishment. Previously, Illinois did not provide statute definition. The Illinois School Code has now been amended to prohibit corporal punishment and has specifically defined corporal punishment. Teachers are required by law to effectively discipline students. The 1993 Illinois School Code Amendments state certain minimal

guidelines for maintenance of discipline in Section 24-24 as follows:

Maintenance of discipline. Teachers and other certificated educational employees shall maintain discipline in the schools, including school grounds which are owned or leased by the board and used for school purposes and activities. In all matters relating to the discipline in and conduct of the schools and the school children, they stand in the relation of parents and guardians to the pupils. This relationship shall extend to all activities connected with the school program, including all athletic and extracurricular programs, and may be exercised at any time for the safety and supervision of the pupils in the absence of their parents or guardians.

Nothing in this Section affects the power of the board to establish rules with respect to discipline; except that each board shall establish a policy on discipline, and the policy so established shall provide that a teacher may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for the other students, school personnel or persons or for the purpose of self defense or the defense of property and may remove a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior and shall

include provisions which provide due process to students. The policy shall not include slapping, paddling or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions nor shall it include the intentional infliction of bodily harm.

### Assumptions

The following assumptions were made:

1. That respondents were familiar with the discipline policies used in their districts.
2. All respondents based their answers on their own experiences and not on current trends.

### Limitations

The study was restricted by the following limitations:

1. The data for the study was obtained from a random sample of public school superintendents and principals in Southern Illinois. Therefore, caution must be exercised when generalizing the findings of this study to other public schools in different locations.
2. The impact of legal change regarding corporal punishment affected responses of superintendents and principals.
3. That respondents formed a select group who wanted to give their opinion on past use of corporal punishment.

The fact that corporal punishment is now illegal, may have influenced the number of responses.

#### Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Corporal Punishment - Slapping, paddling, prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, and the intentional infliction of bodily harm.

Punishment - The adverse stimulus or consequence that is presented following a response to reduce the rate and probability of the occurrence of that response.

Discipline - The orderly and prescribed conduct and pattern of behavior.

Alternative Models for Behavior - The use of other disciplinary strategies such as assertive discipline and behavior modification as opposed to corporal punishment for managing misbehavior.

## Chapter II

### Rationale, Related Literature and Research

#### Rationale

America is often considered a violent country, founded in an atmosphere of revolution. The spanking of children is alive and well today, existing as one of those behaviors so rooted in tradition and so ubiquitous in nature that few experts have questioned its potential harm. Even fewer have bothered to evaluate its effects (Welsh 1985).

In a day when child abuse is one of society's foremost concerns, 56% of public school teachers still favor the right to inflict corporal punishment on children, according to Simmons (1991). Slate, Perez, Waldrop, and Justen (1991) state that physical punishment is part of our pedagogical legacy. Within the last decade, data have been collected that indicate that sexual, racial, and age inequalities are present in the application of corporal punishment. The rationale for physical punishment comes from Calvinistic theology, as illustrated by the old adage, "Spare the rod, spoil the child." Corporal punishment, despite research evidence to the contrary, is still believed to be an effective means of stopping student misbehavior, especially by educators in the South, the Southwest, and rural areas of the country (Good and Brophy 1990). Some countries

permanently removed corporal punishment from their school systems as far back as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today every industrial country in the world has now prohibited corporal punishment except the United States, South Africa, Canada, and Australia, according to the Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet (1993).

Although punitive disciplinary techniques such as corporal punishment are still used extensively, the lack of discipline is consistently cited in the annual Gallup education poll as one of the most serious problems confronting the public schools (Lasley, 1989). Schonberger (1986) agrees that discipline is a major concern in most classrooms. This information suggests that perhaps corporal punishment is not as effective as some believe.

The practice of corporal punishment is a legally driven issue. Prior to January 1, 1994, Illinois was permissive. The ban of corporal punishment mandates the development of new school discipline policies. Various court cases have challenged the constitutionality of corporal punishment of students (Jones, 1988). Courts have sanctioned corporal punishment (Baker v. Owen, 1975, Ingraham v. Wright, 1977). Before corporal punishment was banned in Illinois, the Illinois State Board of Education in The Illinois Program for Evaluation, Supervision, and Recognition of Schools



documented that teachers had the legal authority to punish school children physically in order to maintain discipline in schools. The legality of corporal punishment has been sanctioned by the courts in much the same manner as governmental immunity; that is, in the absence of limiting statutes, the teachers had the power to administer corporal punishment (People v. Ball, 1974; Holt v. Cross, 1984).

Recently, the legality of corporal punishment in the public schools has been drawn into question from several different perspectives. The primary arguments are encompassed in three broad categories: (a) the social and psychological arguments that society has progressed past the physical punishment stage; (b) the idea that legally corporal punishment is "cruel and unusual" punishment; and (c) that corporal punishment should not be administered without first providing procedural due process of law (Jones, 1988; Baker v Owen; Ingraham v. Wright).

Teachers have tried over the years to instill values and a sense of control in their students. However, many of these methods, including corporal punishment, appear not to be working. The traditional, punishment oriented, authoritarian approach has attempted to utilize a number of punitive measures to ameliorate discipline problems. This approach condones the reinstatement of corporal punishment

and other forms of punishment. Since psychologists have determined that punishment is virtually ineffective in changing behavior, other methods of maintaining discipline in the classroom may need to be examined (Schonberger, 1986).

Johns and MacNaughton (1990) state that one of the single most controversial and enduring issues in American education is the use of corporal punishment in schools. Although 26 states have now banned corporal punishment, there remains support for the practice, or at least, support for leaving the decision to the school board regarding whether it should be included as one of the disciplinary alternatives. The support in favor of corporal punishment includes teachers who are by no means united on the issue of abolishing it. Although the National Education Association has gone on record against corporal punishment, not all NEA affiliates agree. The Ohio Education Association has opposed recent efforts in the Ohio General Assembly to outlaw corporal punishment, arguing that the issue should be resolved through collective bargaining at the local level. The American Federation of Teachers would similarly leave the matter to local school boards. They state that they do not believe in corporal punishment, but that the teacher's authority to insist on a disciplined environment should not

be jeopardized by a law or school regulation. The Cleveland Teachers' Union's reaction to a board decision to abolish corporal punishment, lamented the absence of this alternative because busing made detention difficult. The National School Board Association also prefers that decisions on this matter be left to the local school board. The Association of Christian Schools in Wisconsin, representing what may be a similar sentiment of Christian day schools in other states, say that they view discipline as part of the curriculum and that private schools should be exempt from any statewide ban.

Dobson, a professor of clinical pediatrics, is one of the few recognized authorities who supports a policy of the use of corporal punishment. Dobson (1970) puts primary emphasis on the home in developing an orderly, productive, disciplined child; however, he feels that the school is a vital secondary force. Dobson views the task of the school as similar to the task of the home, while he does not advocate corporal punishment for teenagers. He believes that primary school teachers should maintain control in the classroom even if it requires an occasional application of corporal punishment (Johns and MacNaughton, 1990).

Opponents of corporal punishment link the practice to the issue of child abuse. An array of organizations oppose

corporal punishment. Simmons (1991) states that corporal punishment is a form of child abuse and teaches children that force is preferred over reasoning and creates mistrust and provides inappropriate models of behavior. She believes that corporal punishment does not produce positive behavioral changes and that true discipline puts children in control of themselves.

Those who condone corporal punishment feel that it is a viable alternative for maintaining classroom discipline. Many teachers feel that abolition of corporal punishment represents an attack on the professional authority and integrity of the teacher. Some feel that it is easy to understand, needs no in-service, and is appropriate for some types of students in some types of situations (Schonberger, 1986).

It is the researcher's opinion that corporal punishment will be an issue of contention among educators, legislators, and the public for many years to come. Johns and MacNaughton (1990) state that future predictions indicate that the use of the practice will slowly decline as state-by-state legislative action and the risk of law suits make it seem unwise. However, the banning of corporal punishment promises to be a lengthy process, as each state legislature deals with this controversial issue.

It is the writer's opinion that abolition of corporal punishment is certain to have an impact on school discipline in the future. As more states abolish the practice, school discipline policies will reflect this change. Districts will be required to incorporate alternatives in their discipline policies. More positive behavior management techniques will have to be developed as well as opportunities for teachers and administrators to become skilled in employing these techniques.

#### Review of Literature and Research

In recent years, many states and school districts have begun to examine the issue of corporal punishment. The paddling of school children as a form of discipline is rapidly disappearing from American education as the practice has come under attack from teachers, pediatricians, child abuse experts, and state legislators. According to the Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet (1993), statistics released by the U. S. Department of Education show a 32% decline in corporal punishment in the last two years. More and more state legislatures reject physical punishment of students as outmoded and potentially harmful, as reported in the Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet (1993). Growing numbers of national organizations have called on schools to reject the practice of corporal punishment as a form of violence that

sends children the wrong message. Because the state of Illinois has banned corporal punishment as of January, 1994, administrators who currently use it as a disciplinary technique will need to examine other alternatives.

Research was conducted by Jones (1988) which investigated the policies and procedures on corporal punishment in Illinois public school districts during 1987-88. The findings of this study indicated that most elementary districts permitted corporal punishment and most superintendents favored corporal punishment. One-half of the districts permitted teacher usage of corporal punishment, while one-fourth restricted usage to only administrators. Most high school districts did not permit corporal punishment and most high school superintendents did not favor corporal punishment. The results of the study also indicated that some school districts violated law by permitting corporal punishment usage by noncertified staff and did not have corporal punishment policies and procedures in several areas required by law. Other findings indicated restrictions in areas of physical discipline other than spankings and most superintendents favored a spanking definition of corporal punishment (Jones, 1988).

Diamond (1976) conducted a study of the use of corporal punishment in middle and junior high schools in the state of

Michigan. The results of this study indicated that corporal punishment was being administered to students in varying degrees and that male teachers were using the practice more often than female teachers. Teachers surveyed in the study were allowed to administer corporal punishment, while counselors were not allowed to administer corporal punishment. The majority of the principals indicated their belief that corporal punishment was effective. Teachers and other administrators in this study also believed that corporal punishment was effective.

Rose (1984) conducted a study of the use of corporal punishment in American public schools. The results of this study indicated that the majority of principals used corporal punishment and that 83% perceived it to be effective. Female principals were more likely to use corporal punishment than their male colleagues and the use of corporal punishment declined as the grade level increased. Principals of schools in smaller communities reported a disproportionately high use of corporal punishment, whereas relatively fewer principals of schools in larger communities reported using corporal punishment. However, Rose (1984) concluded that the effectiveness of corporal punishment as a management technique remained to be documented.



Heitzman (1983) states some pros and cons of corporal punishment. He believes that it halts undesirable behavior and helps students learn acceptable behaviors. It also discourages others from imitating unacceptable behaviors. However, punishment can cause students to withdraw in response or to become aggressive. Students may generalize and direct hostility toward all authority figures. Punishment may encourage imitation of the punishment itself and result in avoidance and ridicule by peers. Heitzman's work clearly shows that the disadvantages of the use of corporal punishment outweigh the advantages. The removal of corporal punishment should be no more restricting to educators than the removal of any single discipline alternative.

Johns and MacNaughton (1990) enumerate the pros and cons of corporal punishment. One argument in favor of the practice is that it is one procedure among many. It may work with some students in some circumstances. There are many parents who support the practice. Therefore, the use of corporal punishment is consistent support for home procedure. Corporal punishment is a considerably less severe form of punishment than some other kinds. If administered judiciously, it is far less harmful than suspension. Denying teachers the right to exercise judgment

about the use of corporal punishment is to maintain that they are incapable of making professional decisions regarding punishment. Another argument supporting the practice is that it may reinforce the concept that a just society can deliver punishment where appropriate. Corporal punishment is immediate and quickly terminates the event. Unlike many other more complex models for promoting classroom management and discipline, corporal punishment does not require training and lengthy, time-consuming efforts to bring about changes in students' behavior (Johns and MacNaughton, 1990).

Johns and MacNaughton (1990) also report several arguments against corporal punishment. Many instances of the nonjudicious use of corporal punishment may be cited. Corporal punishment is often discriminatory and is used more often with children of lower socioeconomic background, inner-city children, and nonconformists. Corporal punishment is often ineffectual and a dehumanizing practice. It has long been outlawed in the United States military and in prisons in most western nations. Corporal punishment is an aggressive, violent means of discipline and makes the teacher a poor model by promoting force. It may cause psychological as well as physical harm and can cause posttraumatic stress disorders and school avoidance. It may

also prove harmful to self-esteem. Corporal punishment may be highly subject to lawsuits (Johns and MacNaughton, 1990).

Vockell (1991) states that a major defect of corporal punishment is that it is seductive because it tricks the person administering it into believing that it is more effective than it really is. Teachers who use corporal punishment may fail to realize that they and the student may miss an opportunity for learning. Since misbehavior is often an indication that a child has a problem with self-management of behavior, the ideal strategy would be to teach the child to solve the problem, not to solve it for him or her. Corporal punishment actually relieves the offender and punisher of the responsibility to search for a more appropriate solution to the problem, according to Vockell (1991).

Vockell (1991) outlines the pros and cons of corporal punishment. The three advantages include:

1. Corporal punishment is likely to be perceived as unpleasant by the recipient.
2. Corporal punishment can be administered quickly.
3. The meaning of corporal punishment is clear and easily communicated. (p. 278)

Vockell also outlines five major disadvantages of corporal punishment:

1. Corporal punishment is not often logically related to the misbehavior for which it is administered.
2. There are few, if any, productive behaviors the recipient can perform to terminate the punishment.
3. Corporal punishment teaches recipients socially unacceptable ways for problem solving.
4. Corporal punishment may be administered in a counterproductive spirit of frustration or vindictiveness which may interfere with learning.
5. Corporal punishment may be related to child abuse and the punishment may result in litigation.

(p. 279)

According to Diamantes (1992), Rust and Kinnard (1983) studied personality traits of teachers who use corporal punishment. They found that educators who use the practice tend to be comparatively close-minded, anxious, emotional, and impulsive. They were also more likely to have been punished themselves while in school. They also had fewer years of experience and displayed less variety of disciplinary techniques. Effective instructional management must include plans for dealing with discipline problems.

One of the most challenging issues related to corporal punishment are accusations that corporal punishment is administered in a manner biased against males and minority groups, according to Shaw and Braden (1990). Nationwide, 25% of students are black, but 37% of corporal punishment cases involve black children. Males comprise 51% of the nation's school children, but 80% of the cases of corporal punishment involve males. These discrepancies suggest race and gender bias. The study conducted by Shaw and Braden demonstrated a small, yet statistically significant relationship between race and corporal punishment, and a larger statistically significant relationship between gender and corporal punishment. The results indicated evidence of race and gender bias in the administration of corporal punishment. The findings of this same study also suggested that corporal punishment was administered without regard to the child's current or previous rule breaking behavior. Corporal punishment did not appear to be reserved for incorrigible children nor for serious rule violations.

Slate, Perez, Waldrop, and Justen (1991) report that data strongly suggest that disciplinary elements exist in the use of corporal punishment in American public schools. In addition to the problem of bias, evidence exists that corporal punishment is ineffective in eliminating

inappropriate behavior (Good and Brophy 1990). According to a civil rights survey, boys are paddled more often than girls, at a rate of twenty-five to one. Another study reported that males accounted for 80% of all paddling incidents. A study by Rose (1984) also indicated that male students are paddled more frequently than girls.

Slate, Perez, Waldrop, and Justen (1991) also report that a study conducted by McCarthy and Hoge (1987), found evidence indicating that the strongest predictor of corporal punishment, other than the amount or severity of misconduct, is the amount of punishment received by the student in the last year. The next strongest influence was the teacher's perception of the misbehaving student's overall demeanor. The third contributor was the misbehaving student's grades. The relationship between these predictors and corporal punishment is vague.

Lundell (1986) reports that some educators feel that taking away the threat of corporal punishment would leave them with no practical control techniques. However, a wide variety of positive, nonaversive behavior management procedures have been developed and can be employed in any classroom setting at any level of severity. A variety of alternative models for behavior have been developed and effective discipline strategies have been outlined.

In-service training programs have been developed as listed below:

1. In-school suspension programs help lower the suspension and expulsion rates and keep students in school.
2. The use of Saturday school, a form of detention, is also an alternative to corporal punishment.
3. Educators may use the parent pickup program, where they work with parents to establish immediate consequences for disruptions.
4. Point systems are very effective and can be set up with students at any grade level.
5. Daily home-school reporting programs may be established and are effective with many students.

In the massive amount of educational research that has been done over the years, there are no empirically based studies that support the use of corporal punishment. No supportive evidence was found in the major reviews of the literature done by Rose (1984) and Bongiovanni (1979). An expert in operant conditioning, B. F. Skinner (1971), has determined that punished behavior is likely to reappear after the punitive contingencies are withdrawn. The National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools has concluded that the



elimination of corporal punishment does not harm school discipline or the learning climate (Kessler, 1985). The Mental Health Association in Ohio has compiled research on the countries, states, and cities that have banned the practice of corporal punishment, as reported in the Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet (1993). They concluded that the United States is one of only four countries in the developed world that continues the practice. Many major organizations support the elimination of corporal punishment in the schools as pointed out in the Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet (1993). These include the (1) American Public Health Association, (2) American Psychological Association, (3) National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, (4) European Court of Human Rights, and (5) National Education Association.

Many studies have shown the harmful effects of corporal punishment in schools. Wallerstein (1983) conducted a study of junior high schools and concluded that corporal punishment tends to increase vandalism. A study conducted by Bongiovanni (1977) demonstrated that corporal punishment stimulates violence, aggression, and bullying. Welsh (1985), a clinical psychologist reports that corporal punishment stimulates violence, crime, and delinquency. The American Medical Association Proceedings of the House of

Delegates Board of Trustees (1985), state that corporal punishment causes emotional disorders. Corporal punishment has been shown to endanger a student's health and may cause permanent physical injury, according to Maurer and Taylor, (1992) in an article related to the medical effects of physical punishment.

The fact that more cities and state legislatures are banning corporal punishment and because research has indicated that it is a negative method of discipline, one must examine alternative models of discipline for changing behavior. Short (1988) reports that research conducted by Wayson (1985) suggests that well-disciplined schools have the following characteristics in common:

1. Training in cooperative problem solving
2. Student involvement in problems
3. Rules that promote responsibility
4. Individualized instruction
5. School and home cooperation

Alternative models for positive behaviors should include a student centered environment, incorporation of teacher and student problem solving activities, and a variety of activities to promote student self-esteem and belongingness. These alternative models are more effective in reducing behavior problems than punitive measures. The

result of the use of these alternative models should be the self-discipline of students which is the prerequisite to self-direction and personal growth, as indicated by Schonberger (1986).

Considering the data and research studies on corporal punishment, it is the writer's opinion that educators should examine alternative models for encouraging positive student behaviors. A wide variety of effective alternatives to corporal punishment is available. In setting up discipline procedures, the educator can choose to employ behavior management strategies which are either positive or negative. The approach a teacher takes can have profound effect on the students in the classroom. This influence is eloquently stated by Hiam Ginott, who was a young teacher when he wrote these words:

I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides

whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized. (1972, p. 15).

#### Uniqueness of the Study

The goal of this study was to investigate the perceptions of superintendents and principals on the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice in elementary and junior high schools. The study included three major objectives:

1. The first objective was to identify the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding the effectiveness of past use of corporal punishment.

2. The second objective was to identify the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding alternative models of discipline.

3. The third objective was to determine what percentage of superintendents and principals had been users and nonusers of corporal punishment.

Although research indicates that it is more detrimental than beneficial as a discipline alternative, some educators still believe that corporal punishment has some merit (Lundell, 1986). Corporal punishment was banned in Illinois on January 1, 1994; therefore, other methods of maintaining classroom discipline were examined. School discipline

policies may need to be revised to include other, more positive disciplinary techniques.

### Chapter III

#### Design of the Study

##### Research Questions

The survey questions were designed to determine the perceptions of superintendents and principals in elementary and junior high schools regarding the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice.

The following research questions were used as the focus of this study:

1. What were the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding the effectiveness of corporal punishment?
2. What did superintendents and principals perceive to be some alternative models of discipline to change student behavior?
3. What was the number and percentage of superintendents and principals who had used corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice?

##### Sample and Population

The researcher surveyed all of the elementary and junior high superintendents and principals in a six county area in Southern Illinois. This sample reflects the perceptions of administrators from Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Marion, Perry, and Washington counties. The

population consisted of 57 elementary and junior high superintendents and 42 elementary and junior high principals in the selected geographical area, making a total of 99 administrators. Questionnaires were mailed to superintendents and principals in these districts. A follow-up letter was mailed approximately two weeks after the initial mailing in an attempt to increase the number of responses. Forty usable surveys were returned by superintendents. One was returned not completed. A 72% return rate for superintendents was achieved.

Twenty-six usable surveys were returned by principals. One was not completed according to instructions. Thus a 64% return rate for principals was achieved. The total return rate for both superintendents and principals was 68%.

#### Data Collection and Instrumentation

The questionnaires utilized were designed by the researcher and are included as Appendices A and B. The questionnaires were administered by mail during January of 1994. The surveys were designed to collect data by means of a two-part questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to gather general information from the respondents concerning gender, experience at their present position, district enrollment, and the type of district.

The second part of the questionnaire was designed to gather respondents' perceptions of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice for changing student behavior. This section of the questionnaire includes respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of corporal punishment and alternative educational models to change student behavior.

#### Data Analysis

The returned questionnaires were tabulated by hand in terms of the subjects' responses to each item. General information about the respondents regarding their years of experience, size of school district, and type of school district is reported in Chapter IV.

The results of the study were tabulated using descriptive statistics and reported as numbers and percentages. Information was gathered and the data were organized in terms of numbers and percentages in the form of tables. This information is reported in Chapter IV. The data included perceptions of superintendents and principals related to corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice. The results of the study will be reported in Tables 1-21.



## Chapter IV

### Results

#### General Information

Superintendents and principals were asked to respond to questions concerning their perceptions of the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice to change student behavior. The first part of the questionnaire provided general information about the respondents and their school districts such as gender, experience, district enrollment, and type of district. As shown in Table 1, the majority of those responding were male. Most of the superintendents and principals had less than five years experience. The majority of the school districts had less than 1000 students and the data frequently indicated that they were elementary districts. The data indicated that school districts in Southern Illinois are small elementary school districts. Several school districts have one administrator serving as principal and superintendent. The working population includes parents who are factory workers, coal miners, blue-collar workers, and farmers as well as professionals. Many of the school districts in this geographical area are located in rural farm communities.

Table 1

General Information Regarding Returned Questionnaires.

	Superintendent		Principal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Gender				
Male	36	90%	20	77%
Female	4	10%	6	23%
Experience (years)				
0- 5	25	63%	9	35%
6-10	4	10%	5	18%
11-15	5	13%	4	16%
16-20	3	7%	2	8%
over 20	3	7%	6	23%
District Enrollment				
Under 250	20	50%	3	11%
250- 499	8	20%	2	8%
500- 999	7	17%	7	28%
1000-1249	1	3%	3	11%
1250-1499	1	3%	3	11%
1500-1749	2	5%	1	4%
1750-1999	0	0%	3	11%
2000 & above	1	3%	4	16%
Type of district				
Elementary	35	88%	17	65%
Junior High	0	0%	1	4%
Unit	5	12%	8	31%

Several interesting characteristics were indicated by the general information. Principals tended to have more experience than superintendents. Twenty-three percent of principals were female, but only 10% of superintendents were female.

Use of Corporal Punishment

Through the questionnaire, the researcher tried to determine if corporal punishment had been used as a disciplinary practice, the frequency of its use, and who was responsible for the administration of corporal punishment.

Responses to the questionnaire revealed that the majority of superintendents and principals had not used corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice. The questionnaire indicated that 20% of superintendents and 30% of principals had used corporal punishment, as reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Corporal Punishment Was Used as an Educational Disciplinary Practice in My Building.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(2) 5%	(6) 15%	(3) 7%	(3) 7%	(26) 65%
Principal (N) / (%)	(2) 7%	(6) 23%	(0) 0%	(3) 12%	(15) 58%

The superintendents and principals who had used corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice indicated that the practice had been used infrequently. Only 3% of the superintendents stated that corporal punishment had been used frequently, as indicated in Table

3. Written responses indicated that corporal punishment had been used as a last resort.

Table 3

Corporal Punishment as an Educational Disciplinary Practice  
Was Used Frequently.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(0) 0%	(1) 3%	(0) 0%	(5) 12%	(34) 85%
Principal (N) / (%)	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(6) 23%	(20) 77%

---

The majority of superintendents and principals indicated that the building administrator (principal) had not been responsible for the administration of corporal punishment (see Table 4). This perception may indicate that many school districts did not include corporal punishment as a disciplinary method prior to its ban. Written responses of some administrators indicated that teachers were often reluctant to administer corporal punishment. The majority of superintendents and principals also indicated that the classroom teacher had not been responsible for the administration of corporal punishment in the absence of the principal, as reported in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4

The Building Administrator Was Responsible for the  
Administration of Corporal Punishment.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(5) 12%	(7) 17%	(1) 3%	(3) 8%	(24) 60%
Principal (N) / (%)	(6) 23%	(4) 15%	(0) 0%	(7) 27%	(9) 35%

Table 5

The Classroom Teacher Was Responsible for Administration of  
Corporal Punishment in the Absence of the Administrator  
(Principal).

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(2) 5%	(7) 17%	(3) 7%	(4) 11%	(24) 60%
Principal (N) / (%)	(2) 7%	(7) 27%	(1) 4%	(3) 12%	(13) 50%

Superintendents and principals were divided in their responses regarding the effectiveness of corporal punishment. Sixty-four percent of principals viewed corporal punishment as effective as an educational disciplinary practice at the elementary level, but only 38% of superintendents agreed, as indicated in Table 6. A

possible reason for this difference might be that principals are usually more directly involved with discipline than superintendents of larger districts. Some superintendents included written comments stating that discipline policies which once required corporal punishment create different perceptions than policies which offered it as an option. It was indicated by some administrators that when corporal punishment had been offered to the student as a choice, it had been effectively administered. However, when corporal punishment had been mandated by policy, it had not been as effective.

Table 6

Corporal Punishment Was Effective in Eliminating Undesirable Behaviors.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(2) 5%	(13) 33%	(6) 15%	(5) 12%	(14) 35%
Principal (N) / (%)	(3) 12%	(14) 52%	(3) 12%	(3) 12%	(3) 12%

Half of the superintendents and 62% of principals disagreed with the State's ban of corporal punishment, as indicated in Table 7. Forty percent of superintendents and 38% of principals agreed with the ban of corporal

punishment, demonstrating a wide difference in perceptions.

Table 7

The State's Ban of Corporal Punishment Coincides with My  
Perceptions of its Use as an Educational Disciplinary  
Practice.

		SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent	(N)/(%)	(10)	(6)	(4)	(10)	(10)
		25%	15%	10%	25%	25%
Principal	(N)/(%)	(6)	(4)	(0)	(4)	(12)
		23%	15%	0%	15%	47%

Several administrators indicated through written comments on the questionnaires that the threat of lawsuits and possibility of child abuse encouraged agreement with the ban of corporal punishment. Some administrators also indicated that although corporal punishment had not been used for many years, maintaining it as an option as a means of disciplinary control was effective with students. Some administrators indicated through written response that "the paddle" was effective and did deter repeat misbehavior. One administrator commented that, when corporal punishment had been administered, it had been used with control and "loving reprimand" and that students understood and respected it. It

was also indicated through written response that former students compliment the fact that corporal punishment was a great help as a form of discipline. Another administrator perceived that corporal punishment was not the answer to the problem, but it had been used as a deterrent or threat. Apparently, some administrators would like to retain the practice of corporal punishment as an option. It was indicated that corporal punishment was effective in some instances.

Responses regarding notification of parents and documentation of instances of corporal punishment indicated that parents had not been notified by telephone before the administration of corporal punishment. It was indicated through written responses that it had often been difficult to contact the parent during working hours. However, formal written documentation recorded instances when corporal punishment had been used. Before corporal punishment was banned, parents were required to sign an agreement prohibiting the use of corporal punishment with their child. Districts provided a standardized form for parents to restrict corporal punishment administration. Parental objections to corporal punishment's usage had to be honored. This indicates the reason for this particular perception. Tables 8 and 9 illustrate these responses.



Table 8

When Corporal Punishment Was Used, Parents Were Notified by Telephone Prior to Use.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(5) 12%	(12) 30%	(1) 3%	(6) 15%	(16) 40%
Principal (N) / (%)	(8) 31%	(2) 7%	(1) 4%	(9) 35%	(6) 23%

Table 9

When Corporal Punishment Was Used, There Was Formal, Written Documentation.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(14) 35%	(10) 25%	(2) 5%	(4) 10%	(10) 25%
Principal (N) / (%)	(17) 65%	(4) 15%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(5) 20%

The majority of superintendents and principals did not perceive that corporal punishment should have been prohibited with girls of any age, as reported in Table 10. Several administrators' responses indicated concerns with

sex discrimination.

Table 10

The Use of Corporal Punishment Should Have Been Prohibited  
with Girls of any Age.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(9) 23%	(4) 10%	(2) 5%	(17) 42%	(8) 20%
Principal (N) / (%)	(4) 15%	(0) 0%	(2) 9%	(10) 38%	(10) 38%

---

The majority of both superintendents and principals did not perceive that corporal punishment should have been prohibited with children twelve years of age or older, as indicated by Table 11. This finding is in contrast with Dobson's opinion (1970) that corporal punishment can be effectively administered at the elementary level, but not with teenagers. Concern was expressed related to age discrimination. Several administrators indicated that they had experienced disciplinary problems with children of all ages. It was indicated through written responses that age has little relation to problems with misbehavior. It is interesting to note administrators' views toward the same procedure at all grade levels.

Table 11

Corporal Punishment Should Have Been Prohibited with  
Children Twelve Years of Age or Older.

---

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(9) 23%	(7) 17%	(4) 10%	(10) 25%	(10) 25%
Principal (N) / (%)	(8) 28%	(2) 9%	(1) 4%	(13) 50%	(2) 9%

---

An overwhelming majority of respondents did not perceive that corporal punishment had been used more frequently with minorities. Some respondents included written responses stating that their districts did not have minorities in the student population. The study was limited to small, rural Southern Illinois school districts. It is interesting to note that corporal punishment was not used more often with minorities. More frequent use of corporal punishment with minorities than with other populations would indicate discrimination. This finding is in direct contrast with the nationwide statistics and a civil rights survey as reported in the review of the literature. Table 12 illustrates administrators' perceptions related to the use of corporal punishment with minorities.

Table 12

Corporal Punishment Was Used More Often With Minorities in  
My District.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(6) 15	(6) 15%	(28) 70%
Principal (N) / (%)	(0) 0%	(1) 4%	(0) 0%	(7) 27%	(18) 69%

---

The questionnaire investigated the perceptions of superintendents and principals related to utilization of a disciplinary committee whose goal is setting discipline policy. Seven administrators included copies of their district discipline policies with the returned surveys. All of these discipline policies included a variety of disciplinary options. In-school suspension, the parent pick-up program, and daily home-school reporting were included as options. Only two discipline policies had included corporal punishment as an option prior to its ban in January, 1994. An overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that their districts should have a committee to set discipline policy, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13

It is My Perception That The District Should Have a  
Disciplinary Committee Whose Goal is to set Policies for  
Disciplinary Practice.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(18) 46%	(16) 40%	(3) 7%	(3) 7%	(0) 0%
Principal (N) / (%)	(12) 48%	(14) 52%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%

---

Respondents were also asked whether they perceive that their districts should have a written discipline policy. Again, an overwhelming majority of respondents stated that their districts should have a written discipline policy, as required by the State. Table 14 reports their perceptions regarding discipline policy.

Table 14

The District Should Have a Written Discipline Policy.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendents (N) / (%)	(27) 67%	(12) 30%	(1) 3%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%
Principal (N) / (%)	(16) 62%	(10) 38%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(0) 0%

---

The questionnaire attempted to determine whether

respondents perceived that their districts should distribute a written discipline policy to board members, teachers, parents, administrators, and students. All superintendents and principals responding agreed, as reflected in Table 15.

Table 15

The District Should Have a Written Discipline Policy Which is Distributed to Board Members, Teachers, Parents, Administrators, and Students.

---

		SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendents	(N) / (%)	(28)	(12)	(0)	(0)	(0)
		70%	30%	0%	0%	0%
Principals	(N) / (%)	(17)	(9)	(0)	(0)	(0)
		65%	35%	0%	0%	0%

---

A question addressed by the questionnaire was the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding whether corporal punishment is justifiable if it is administered in the home by a parent. The majority of both superintendents and principals perceived corporal punishment to be justifiable if administered by a parent. However, 37% of respondents were undecided as reflected in Table 16. It is interesting to note that a few administrators indicated through written comments that the responsibility for corporal punishment should be with the parent. Apparently, it is perceived by some that corporal punishment may have

some merit as a disciplinary practice in the home environment.

Table 16

Corporal Punishment is Justifiable if it is Administered in the Home by a Parent.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N)/(%)	(9) 22%	(16) 40%	(10) 25%	(1) 3%	(4) 10%
Principal (N)/(%)	(13) 49%	(9) 35%	(3) 12%	(0) 0%	(1) 4%

The questionnaire attempted to determine the respondents' perceptions regarding the use of in-school suspension as an alternative to corporal punishment. A majority of superintendents and principals perceived that in-school suspension should be used as a disciplinary practice, but 40% were undecided, as shown in Table 17. A few written responses were included which stated that it is beneficial to keep the child in the school environment. However, some administrators related concerns regarding supervision of students during in-school suspensions. A written response also indicated that students may become immune to in-school suspension.

Table 17

In-school Suspension Should be Used as a Disciplinary Practice.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendents (N) / (%)	(12) 30%	(21) 53%	(5) 12%	(0) 0%	(2) 5%
Principals (N) / (%)	(10) 38%	(8) 28%	(6) 25%	(2) 9%	(0) 0%

The field experience was designed to determine the perceptions of administrators related to the use of Saturday school as an alternative to corporal punishment. There was a diversity of perceptions on this issue, as shown by Table 18. The majority of superintendents agreed with the use of Saturday school, however, 48% either disagreed or were undecided. Only a small percentage of principals agreed with the use of Saturday school, with 46% disagreeing. Some principals included a written response stating their concerns with its use because of cost. One opinion expressed was the fact that some parents do not cooperate and problems with supervision result. Some administrators expressed the opinion that Saturday school as a form of discipline may be used more effectively with high school age children than with the elementary level.



Table 18

Saturday School Should be Used as an Alternative to Corporal Punishment.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(6) 15%	(15) 37%	(8) 20%	(2) 5%	(9) 23%
Principal (N) / (%)	(4) 15%	(3) 12%	(7) 27%	(5) 19%	(7) 27%

---

Respondents were also asked their perceptions of the use of a parent pick-up program as an alternative to corporal punishment. As shown in Table 19, an overwhelming majority of superintendents and principals perceived a parent pick-up program to be a viable alternative to corporal punishment. However, one administrator stated that use of the parent pick-up program had been unsuccessful in his district. A small percentage of parents who were working, left responsibility for children with grandparents. Those grandparents had often been uncooperative. Parents seemed to hold school officials responsible for discipline and did not wish to be involved. Some concern was expressed regarding uncooperative parents and both parents in the work force.

Table 19

A Parent Pick-up Program Should be Used as an Alternative to Corporal Punishment.

---

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendent (N) / (%)	(12) 30%	(22) 55%	(4) 10%	(1) 3%	(1) 3%
Principal (N) / (%)	(11) 44%	(8) 28%	(4) 15%	(2) 9%	(1) 4%

---

The survey attempted to determine respondents' perceptions regarding the use of a point system with a reward incentive as an alternative to corporal punishment. Slightly over half of superintendents agreed, with over a third undecided on this issue. The majority of principals were undecided and 40% perceived the point system to be a viable alternative, as reflected in Table 20.

Table 20

A Point System Should be Used as a Disciplinary Practice.

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	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendents (N) / (%)	(8) 20%	(15) 37%	(14) 35%	(2) 5%	(1) 3%
Principals (N) / (%)	(4) 15%	(6) 25%	(14) 52%	(1) 4%	(1) 4%

---

The questionnaire also addressed respondents' perceptions of daily home-school reporting programs as a disciplinary practice. More than half of superintendents and slightly less than half of principals perceived these programs as a viable alternative to corporal punishment. Almost a third of respondents were undecided, as reflected in Table 21. Some respondents included written comments in the questionnaire indicating concerns related to the time involved in reporting. It is interesting to note that some administrators commented that home-school reporting had occurred before the use of corporal punishment.

Table 21

Daily Home-school Reporting Programs Should be Used as an Alternative to Corporal Punishment.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Superintendents (N) / (%)	(8) 20%	(13) 33%	(11) 27%	(8) 20%	(0) 0%
Principals (N) / (%)	(5) 18%	(7) 27%	(8) 31%	(3) 12%	(3) 12%

## Chapter V

### Summary, Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Summary

This study focused on the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice at the elementary level. This was accomplished by administering a survey to 57 superintendents and 42 principals in the counties of Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Marion, Perry, and Washington. This sample comprised a total of 99 administrators of elementary school districts. Analysis of the survey results provided information about the perceptions of superintendents and principals toward past use of corporal punishment such as: previous use of corporal punishment, frequency of prior use, who was responsible for administration, effectiveness of corporal punishment, agreement with the State's ban of the practice, specific details of prior use of corporal punishment, perceptions of discipline policies, and perceptions of possible alternatives to corporal punishment.

#### Findings

One objective of the study determined the number of users and nonusers of corporal punishment. The findings of the survey indicated that the majority of superintendents

and principals had not used corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice. The administrators who had used corporal punishment indicated that it had been used infrequently.

Another objective of the study identified administrators' perceptions of the effectiveness of past use of corporal punishment. Superintendents and principals were divided in their perceptions of the effectiveness of corporal punishment. The majority of principals perceived corporal punishment to be effective, whereas only 38% of superintendents perceived corporal punishment to be effective.

Half of the superintendents and 62% of principals disagreed with the State's ban of corporal punishment. Many administrators indicated through written responses concerns regarding child abuse and law suits; although they felt that abolition of corporal punishment would possibly limit disciplinary control.

Although parents were not usually notified by telephone when corporal punishment had been administered, there was formal written documentation of the event.

The majority of respondents did not perceive that corporal punishment should have been prohibited with girls and children twelve years of age and older. Concerns were

expressed with sex discrimination. Many administrators perceived that age had little relation to misbehavior. An overwhelming majority of respondents did not perceive that corporal punishment had been used more frequently with minorities. The study was limited to small Southern Illinois school districts. Therefore, many districts did not have minorities in the student population.

The majority of respondents perceived that their districts should have a committee to set discipline policy and should maintain a written discipline policy distributed to board members, teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

A majority of superintendents and principals perceived that corporal punishment was justifiable when administered in the home by a parent; however, 37% were undecided. It seems apparent that some administrators may perceive that corporal punishment as a disciplinary option may have some merit in the home environment. Through written responses, some administrators indicated that responsibility for corporal punishment should be parental.

An objective of the study was to identify perceptions of administrators regarding alternative models of discipline to change student behavior. The majority of respondents perceived that in-school suspension programs and parent

pick-up programs should be used as alternatives to corporal punishment. Respondents were divided regarding Saturday school as an alternative. The majority of superintendents agreed with the use of Saturday school, but 47% either disagreed or were undecided. Forty-six percent of principals disagreed with the use of Saturday school, with only a small percentage perceiving Saturday school to be useful. Slightly over half of superintendents and 40% of principals perceived the point system as a reward incentive to be a viable alternative to corporal punishment. More than half of superintendents and slightly less than half of principals perceived daily home-school reporting programs to be a viable alternative to corporal punishment.

### Conclusions

The researcher concluded that educators need to examine more positive disciplinary models in the future. Since corporal punishment was banned, other disciplinary techniques such as assertive discipline and behavior modification need to be incorporated into school discipline policies. Administrators may need to formulate new discipline policies collectively with teachers, parents, and students. School districts should structure their discipline programs to include less punitive, more constructive methods of discipline.

### Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of superintendents and principals regarding former use of corporal punishment and possible alternative disciplinary practices for future consideration. The results of the study may give superintendents, principals, and prospective superintendents and principals and other interested persons some facts related to prior use of corporal punishment. According to the survey, the majority of superintendents and principals perceived the ban of corporal punishment from a negative perspective. Although few administrators had actually used corporal punishment in the past, some expressed concern regarding the future with respect to discipline. Many administrators perceived abolition of corporal punishment to be a positive move toward other methods of maintaining discipline. Several administrators expressed concern related to child abuse and lawsuits.

It is recommended that a committee to set discipline policy should be developed as well as a formal written discipline policy which is distributed to board members, parents, teachers, administrators, and students. Since corporal punishment can no longer be used as a discipline



alternative, representatives from both home and school should collectively formulate discipline policies and strategies.

According to the survey, administrators were somewhat divided in perceptions related to the various alternatives to corporal punishment such as in-school suspension, parent pick-up programs, Saturday school, the point system with rewards as incentives, and daily home-school reporting programs. The researcher recommends that school districts examine these, as well as other discipline alternatives, with respect to effectiveness, cost, available personnel, record keeping, and time involved. It is recommended that discipline policies and alternatives should be formulated and outlined with board members, parents, administrators, teachers, and students prior to the beginning of school.

As mentioned in the review of related literature, there are many pros and cons of corporal punishment. It may no longer be used as an educational disciplinary practice to change student behavior. It is recommended that school districts structure their discipline programs to include more positive methods of changing student behavior. Effective instructional management must include plans for dealing with discipline problems. Administrators must provide both new and experienced teachers with assistance

aimed toward promoting self-discipline of students.

Positive discipline is crucial to an effective productive school. Knowledge and successful performance in the area of discipline will help ensure a successful career as a superintendent.

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Appendix A

Superintendent Questionnaire

Corporal Punishment  
63

Mary Ellen Grimes  
1828 Richview Road  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Dear Superintendent:

The following questionnaire relates to my field study for the Specialists degree at Eastern Illinois University. It is designed to investigate the perceptions of superintendents concerning the past use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice to change student behavior.

The questionnaire will take approximately ten minutes of your time to respond. Please return the instrument in the enclosed envelope. I would also appreciate receiving a copy of your school discipline policy. The completion of this questionnaire is vital to the success of the study. Your responses will be kept anonymous as information will be reported by category of respondent rather than by name or place. Your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Grimes, Researcher

\*\*\*\*\*  
(Complete only if you want a copy of the findings)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip



Part I: General Information

Directions: Please mark (X) the appropriate item.

1. Gender

a. \_\_\_\_ Male                      b. \_\_\_\_ Female

2. Experience as Superintendent in Current School  
District.

a. \_\_\_\_ 0- 5 years                      d. \_\_\_\_ 16-20  
b. \_\_\_\_ 6-10                              e. \_\_\_\_ over 20  
c. \_\_\_\_ 11-15

3. District Enrollment

a. \_\_\_\_ under 250                      e. \_\_\_\_ 1250-1499  
b. \_\_\_\_ 250- 499                      f. \_\_\_\_ 1500-1749  
c. \_\_\_\_ 500- 999                      g. \_\_\_\_ 1750-1999  
d. \_\_\_\_ 1000-1249                      h. \_\_\_\_ 2000 & above

4. Type of District

a. \_\_\_\_ Elementary    b. \_\_\_\_ Junior High    c. \_\_\_\_ Unit

-----  
Part II: Superintendent's Perceptions of Corporal  
Punishment as an Educational Disciplinary  
Practice

The purpose of the study in Part II of the  
questionnaire is to determine your perception of corporal  
punishment as an educational disciplinary practice. Please  
mark the appropriate answer below.

Rating Scale:

1 = Strongly Agree (SA)  
2 = Agree (A)  
3 = Undecided (U)  
4 = Disagree (D)  
5 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Corporal Punishment  
65

- |  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. It is my perception that corporal punishment was used as an educational disciplinary practice in my building.                                 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 2. It is my perception that corporal punishment was used often in my school district.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 3. It is my perception that the building administrator (principal) was responsible for the administration of corporal punishment.                | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 4. It is my perception that the classroom teacher was responsible for the administration of corporal punishment in the absence of the principal. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 5. It is my perception that corporal punishment was effective in eliminating undesirable behaviors at the elementary level.                      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 6. The State's ban of corporal punishment coincides with my perceptions of its use as a disciplinary practice.                                   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 7. It is my perception that, when corporal punishment was used, the parents were notified by telephone before it was administered.               | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |

Corporal Punishment  
66

- |  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
|  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 8. It is my perception that, when corporal punishment was used in my building, there was formal, written documentation regarding details of the incident.          |    |   |   |   |    |
| 9. It is my perception that the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice should have been prohibited with girls of any age.              | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 10. It is my perception that corporal punishment should have been prohibited with children twelve years of age or older.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 11. It is my perception that corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice was used more often with minorities in my district.                                    | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 12. It is my perception that the district should have a disciplinary committee whose goal is to set policies for disciplinary practice.                            | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 13. It is my perception that my district should have a written discipline policy.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 14. It is my perception that the district should distribute a formal, written discipline policy to board members, teachers, parents, administrators, and students. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |

# Corporal Punishment

67

SA A U D SD

1 2 3 4 5

15. It is my perception  
that corporal punishment  
as a means of discipline  
is justifiable if it is  
administered in the home  
by a parent.

1 2 3 4 5

16. It is my perception  
that in-school suspension  
programs should be used  
as an educational  
disciplinary practice.

1 2 3 4 5

17. It is my perception  
that Saturday school  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

1 2 3 4 5

18. It is my perception  
that parent pick-up  
programs should be used  
as an educational  
disciplinary practice.

1 2 3 4 5

19. It is my perception  
that the point system  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

1 2 3 4 5

20. It is my perception  
that daily home-school  
reporting programs  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

Appendix B

Principal Questionnaire

Corporal Punishment  
69

Mary Ellen Grimes  
1828 Richview Road  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Dear Principal:

The following questionnaire relates to my field study for the Specialists degree at Eastern Illinois University. It is designed to investigate the perceptions of superintendents concerning the past use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice to change student behavior.

The questionnaire will take approximately ten minutes of your time to respond. Please return the instrument in the enclosed envelope. I would also appreciate receiving a copy of your school discipline policy. The completion of this questionnaire is vital to the success of the study. Your responses will be kept anonymous as information will be reported by category of respondent rather than by name or place. Your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Grimes, Researcher

\*\*\*\*\*  
(Complete only if you want a copy of the findings)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip

Part I: General Information

Directions: Please mark (X) the appropriate item.

1. Gender

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Male                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Female

2. Experience as Principal in Current School  
District.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ 0- 5 years                      d. \_\_\_\_\_ 16-20  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ 6-10                              e. \_\_\_\_\_ over 20  
c. \_\_\_\_\_ 11-15

3. District Enrollment

a. \_\_\_\_\_ under 250                      e. \_\_\_\_\_ 1250-1499  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ 250- 499                          f. \_\_\_\_\_ 1500-1749  
c. \_\_\_\_\_ 500- 999                          g. \_\_\_\_\_ 1750-1999  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ 1000-1249                      h. \_\_\_\_\_ 2000 & above

4. Type of District

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary    b. \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High    c. \_\_\_\_\_ Unit

-----  
Part II: Principal's Perceptions of Corporal  
Punishment as an Educational Disciplinary  
Practice

The purpose of the study in Part II of the  
questionnaire is to determine your perception of corporal  
punishment as an educational disciplinary practice. Please  
mark the appropriate answer below.

Rating Scale:

1 = Strongly Agree (SA)  
2 = Agree (A)  
3 = Undecided (U)  
4 = Disagree (D)  
5 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Corporal Punishment  
71

- |  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. It is my perception that corporal punishment was used as an educational disciplinary practice in my building.                                 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 2. It is my perception that corporal punishment was used often in my school district.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 3. It is my perception that the building administrator (principal) was responsible for the administration of corporal punishment.                | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 4. It is my perception that the classroom teacher was responsible for the administration of corporal punishment in the absence of the principal. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 5. It is my perception that corporal punishment was effective in eliminating undesirable behaviors at the elementary level.                      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 6. The State's ban of corporal punishment coincides with my perceptions of its use as a disciplinary practice.                                   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 7. It is my perception that, when corporal punishment was used, the parents were notified by telephone before it was administered.               | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |



Corporal Punishment

72

	SA	A	U	D	SD
8. It is my perception that, when corporal punishment was used in my building, there was formal, written documentation regarding details of the incident.	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is my perception that the use of corporal punishment as an educational disciplinary practice should have been prohibited with girls of any age.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It is my perception that corporal punishment should have been prohibited with children twelve years of age or older.	1	2	3	4	5
11. It is my perception that corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice was used more often with minorities in my district.	1	2	3	4	5
12. It is my perception that the district should have a disciplinary committee whose goal is to set policies for disciplinary practice.	1	2	3	4	5
13. It is my perception that my district should have a written discipline policy.	1	2	3	4	5
14. It is my perception that the district should distribute a formal, written discipline policy to board members, teachers, parents, administrators, and students.	1	2	3	4	5

Corporal Punishment  
73

SA    A    U    D    SD  
1    2    3    4    5

15. It is my perception  
that corporal punishment  
as a means of discipline  
is justifiable if it is  
administered in the home  
by a parent.

1    2    3    4    5

16. It is my perception  
that in-school suspension  
programs should be used  
as an educational  
disciplinary practice.

1    2    3    4    5

17. It is my perception  
that Saturday school  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

1    2    3    4    5

18. It is my perception  
that parent pick-up  
programs should be used  
as an educational  
disciplinary practice.

1    2    3    4    5

19. It is my perception  
that the point system  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

1    2    3    4    5

20. It is my perception  
that daily home-school  
reporting programs  
should be used as an  
educational disciplinary  
practice.

Corporal Punishment  
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Appendix C  
Follow-Up Letters

Corporal Punishment  
75

Mary Ellen Grimes  
1828 Richview Road  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Dear Superintendent:

A short time ago, you received a copy of a questionnaire related to the perceptions of superintendents regarding past use of corporal punishment. If you have completed and returned the survey, I want to thank you for your cooperation. If you have not found time to complete the survey, I hope you can do so soon.

Please return the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope as soon as possible.

I really appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey. Again, I thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Grimes, Researcher

Corporal Punishment

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Mary Ellen Grimes  
1828 Richview Road  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Dear Principal:

A short time ago, you received a copy of a questionnaire related to the perceptions of principals regarding past use of corporal punishment. If you have completed and returned the survey, I want to thank you for your cooperation. If you have not found time to complete the survey, I hope you can do so soon.

Please return the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope as soon as possible.

I really appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey. Again, I thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Grimes, Researcher